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GIFT OF

HOME 9437

R. F. D., No. 2, Box 320

JOHN T. JUDKINS

KENSINGTON PARK

SAN DIEGO, CAL.

FAC SIMILES OF LETTERS

FROM HIS EXCELLENCY

G E O R G E W A S H I N G T O N ,

TO

SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, BART., M. P.

TO THE
LIBRARY OF
THE
GEORGE WASHINGTON FOUNDATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FAC SIMILES OF LETTERS

FROM HIS EXCELLENCY

G E O R G E W A S H I N G T O N ,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

TO

SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, BART., M. P.

ON

AGRICULTURAL AND OTHER INTERESTING TOPICS;

ENGRAVED FROM THE ORIGINAL LETTERS, SO AS TO BE AN EXACT FAC SIMILE
OF THE HAND-WRITING.

LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS
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WASHINGTON:
PUBLISHED BY FRANKLIN KNIGHT.

E. G. DORSEY, PRINTER, PHILADELPHIA.

1844.

TO
THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,
THE FOLLOWING
LETTERS,
WRITTEN BY
THE ILLUSTRIOUS WASHINGTON,
WHO MUST EVER BE REVERED,
AS
AN HONOUR TO THE COUNTRY WHERE HE WAS BORN,
AND
AN ORNAMENT TO HUMAN NATURE,
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY
THEIR SINCERE FRIEND, AND WELL-WISHER,
JOHN SINCLAIR.

P R E F A C E.

A VARIETY of motives, which it may be proper briefly to state, have induced me to submit the following Letters to the attention of the public.

It could not but be highly gratifying to me, to be possessed of so many interesting communications from such a distinguished character as the President of the United States; and it was natural to suppose, that the public at large, but more especially those individuals who revered his memory, would wish to have in their possession copies of a correspondence which displayed to such advantage the superior talents, the generous views, and the unbounded philanthropy of that celebrated statesman.

The peculiar predilection which General WASHINGTON has so strongly and so frequently expressed, in the subsequent letters, for agricultural improvement, which he preferred to every other pursuit, is another circumstance which I was anxious should be recorded for the benefit both of the present and of future times, from a desire that it may make a due impression upon the minds of those who might otherwise be induced to dedicate themselves entirely, either to the phantoms of military fame, or the tortures of political ambition.

The praises which this distinguished statesman has bestowed on the establishment

of the British Board of Agriculture, ("an Institution," he remarks, "of the utility of which he entertained the most favourable idea from the first intimation of it; and that the more he had seen and reflected on the plan since, the more convinced he was of its importance, in a national point of view, not only to Great Britain, but to all other countries,"*) I was solicitous to record, as one means of protecting that valuable establishment from the risk to which it may be exposed from the ignorance or inattention of future ministers, who, incapable of estimating the merits of such an Institution themselves, or conceiving the advantages that may be derived from it, might heedlessly, either diminish the sphere of its utility, or terminate its existence.

The wishes which the founder of the American Republic has expressed for having a similar establishment in America, I also judged it expedient to publish, in the hope that the recommendation of so great a man will ultimately be adopted as soon as the necessary arrangements for that purpose can be made by the government of the United States.

It may now be proper to give a brief account of the origin of the following correspondence.

About the year 1790, I began to be engaged in those extensive inquiries relating to the general state of my native country, and the means of promoting its improvement, which were not only interesting to Great Britain, but to every civilized part of the world; and having resolved to send the first papers which were

* See Letter No. III., 10th July, 1795.

printed on those subjects to several distinguished characters in foreign and distant countries, I could not think of neglecting an individual so pre-eminently conspicuous as the President of the United States of America. In answer to the first letter I had the honour of addressing to him, I received the communication No. I., dated the 20th day of October, 1792.

I embraced every opportunity of transmitting, from time to time, the additional papers which were afterwards printed on the subjects of our correspondence, accompanied by letters, of only one of which I have a copy, in which I endeavoured to demonstrate the advantages which might be derived from establishing a Board of Agriculture in America. Of that letter, I beg leave to subjoin the following extract, as it tends to explain more fully General WASHINGTON's answer of the 6th day of March, 1797, stating the circumstances which at that time prevented the immediate adoption of that measure.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM SIR JOHN SINCLAIR TO GENERAL WASHINGTON,
DATED WHITEHALL, LONDON, 10TH SEPTEMBER, 1796.

“The people of this country, as well as of America, learn, with infinite regret, that you propose resigning your situation as President of the United States. I shall not enter into the discussion of a question of which I am incompetent to judge; but, if it be so, I hope that you will recommend some Agricultural establishment on a great scale before you quit the reins of government. By that I mean a Board of Agriculture, or some similar institution, at Philadelphia, with Societies of Agriculture in the capital of each state, to correspond with it. Such an establishment would soon enable the farmers of America to acquire agricultural

knowledge, and, what is of equal importance, afford them the means of communicating what they have learnt to their countrymen.

“I scarcely think that any government can be properly constituted without such an establishment. As mere individuals, four things are necessary: 1, food; 2, clothing; 3, shelter; 4, mental improvement. As members of a large community, four other particulars seem to be essential; namely: 1, property; 2, marriage; 3, laws for our direction in this world; and, 4, religion to prepare us for another. But the foundation of the whole *is food*, and that country must be the happiest where that *sine qua non* can be most easily obtained. The surest means of securing abundance of food, however, is by ascertaining the best mode of raising it, and rousing a spirit of improvement for that purpose, for both of which the countenance and protection of the government of a country, through the medium of some public establishment, is essential. The trifling expense for which such an institution might be supported is another argument in its favour.

“I am induced more particularly to dwell upon this circumstance, as it might be in my power, on various occasions, to give useful hints to America, were I satisfied that they would be duly weighed, and *if approved of, acted upon*. For instance, you will herewith receive some Egyptian wheat, which produces at the rate of one hundred and eighty bushels per English acre. Indeed, without such a grain, so narrow a country as Egypt could never have fed such multitudes of people as it did in ancient times. I have no doubt of its thriving in America equally well. It also recently occurred to me, that in the southern states, other plants, as the New Zealand kind of hemp, might be raised in great perfection. But to introduce any new article of produce, the countenance, and in some cases the assistance, of the

government of a state is necessary. When once, however, the practicability of cultivating any article is ascertained, it cannot be of any real advantage to a nation if it stand in need of legislative aid.

“But I have already tired your Excellency with too long a dissertation, which I am persuaded you will attribute to its real cause, enthusiasm in favour of Agriculture, and respect for so valuable a friend to it as General WASHINGTON. For other particulars, I must refer to our intelligent friend Doctor EDWARDS, to whose charge I have taken the liberty of delivering a parcel, with some papers we have lately printed, &c.

“It will give me much pleasure to be of any use to Mr. KING, Mr. GORE, or Mr. PINCKNEY, during their residence in England. Indeed, I have always felt a strong desire of showing every attention in my power to any American gentleman who may have visited this country; for though our governments are now distinct, the people are in fact the same, without any possible inducement to quarrel, if they knew their respective interests, and with every reason to wish each other well, and to promote their mutual prosperity.

“Before I conclude, permit me to ask, is there no chance of seeing General WASHINGTON in England? I should be proud of his accepting an apartment in my house, and I am sure that he would meet with the most flattering reception in every part of the Island, but from none with more real attachment and regard, than from, &c.”

As it is a singular circumstance, that a person in such an exalted situation as

General WASHINGTON, should have leisure to write, *with his own hand*, so many letters to an entire stranger, and some of them of considerable length, I have been induced to have them engraved in order to represent the hand-writing of their celebrated author: they are exact copies of those received by me. It is proposed to deposit the originals in the British Museum, as the precious relics of a great man, fit to be preserved in that valuable repository.

It may be proper to add, that the following collection contains all the letters I have received, with the exception of two, the first of which was marked *private*, and is mentioned in General WASHINGTON's letters of the 15th of July, and 6th of November, 1797. It is a long and interesting paper, which, however, it would not be proper to publish at this time. The other letter was of a late date, and alludes to circumstances of a nature which it would be improper at present to communicate to the public.

To conclude, I hope that these letters will not only furnish much satisfactory information to the reader, as containing the sentiments of General WASHINGTON on agricultural and other important subjects, but will also display, to peculiar advantage, the character of the much respected author; and with the profits of the publication I trust it will be in my power to pay a proper tribute of respect to the memory of one, who, though the immediate cause of the separation between Great Britain and America, yet is the person to whom, in a great measure, is to be ascribed the good understanding which now so happily subsists between the two countries; and whose character must ever be revered, even by those with whom he contended, either in war or politics, as containing as much good, with as little alloy, as that of any individual whose memory is recorded in history.

LONDON, 29 *Parliament Street*, 1st *March*, 1800.

SINCE this Work was sent to the press, I find that one of General WASHINGTON's most interesting letters has been lost. There is fortunately, however, an extract from it in the first volume of the Communications published by the Board of Agriculture, (p. 374,) a copy of which I beg leave to lay before the reader, from that publication.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE WASHINGTON, DATED
PHILADELPHIA, 10TH DECEMBER, 1796.

“The result of the experiments entrusted to the care of Dr. FORDYCE, must be as curious as they may prove interesting to the science of husbandry. Not less so will be an intelligent solution of those queries relative to live stock, which are handed to the public.

“A few months more, say the 3d of March next, (1797,) and the scenes of my political life will close, and leave me in the shades of retirement; when, if a few years are allowed me to enjoy it, (many I cannot expect, being upon the verge of sixty-five,) and health is continued to me, I shall peruse with pleasure and edification the fruits of the exertions of the Board for the improvement of agriculture; and shall have leisure, I trust, to realize some of the useful discoveries which have been made in the science of husbandry.

“Until the above period shall have arrived, and particularly during the present

session of Congress, which commenced the 5th instant, I can give but little attention to matters out of the line of my immediate avocations. I did not, however, omit the occasion, at the opening of the session, to call the attention of that body to the importance of agriculture. What will be the result, I know not at present; but if it should be favourable, the hints which you will have it in your power to give cannot fail of being gratefully received by the members who may constitute the Board."

EXTRACT FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON'S SPEECH ON THE OPENING OF
CONGRESS, 5TH DECEMBER 1796.

“It will not be doubted, that, with reference either to individual or national welfare, Agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as nations advance in population and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent, and renders the cultivation of the soil more and more an object of public patronage. Institutions for promoting it grow up, supported by the public purse; and to what object can it be dedicated with greater propriety? Among the means which have been employed to this end, none have been attended with greater success than the establishment of Boards, composed of proper characters, charged with collecting and diffusing information, and enabled by premiums, and small pecuniary aid, to encourage and assist a spirit of discovery and improvement. This species of establishment contributes doubly to the increase of improvement, by stimulating to enterprise and experiment, and by drawing to a common centre, the results everywhere of individual skill and observation, and spreading them thence over the whole nation. Experience accordingly has shown, that they are very cheap instruments of immense national benefits.”

S.E. View of the Mansion of George Washington

MOUNT VERNON.

Philadelphia Oct 20th 1792

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 18th of May, enclosing the Pamphlet & papers which you had the goodness to send me. —

While I beg your acceptance of my acknowledgments for the polite mark of attention in transmitting these things to me, I flatter myself you will be assured that I consider the subject herein recommended as highly important to Society, whose best interests I hope will be promoted by a proper investigation of them, and the happiness of mankind advanced thereby. —

I have to regret that the duties of my public Station do not allow me to pay that attention to Agriculture and the objects attached to it (which have ever been my favourite pursuit) that I could wish; but I will put your

queries

queries respecting Sheep into the hands of
 such Gentlemen as I think most likely to
 attend to them and answer them satisfac-
 torily; I must, however, ^{observe} that no important
 information on the subject can be expected
 from this Country where we have been so
 little in the habit of attending either to
 the breed or improvement of our Stock

With great respect & esteem
 I have the honor to be
 Sir-

Your Most Obed^t Serv^t
 G. Washington

John Sinclair

Mr John Sinclair Barrow
Whitehall,
London.

1th
Philadelphia July 20. 1794.

Sr

I am indebted to you for your several favors of the 15th of June, 15th of August & 11th of September of the last - and for that of the 6th of February in the present year; - for which, and the Pamphlets accompanying them my thanks are particularly due. - To say this and to have suffered them to remain so long unacknowledged, needs explanation. - The truth is, they came to hand - the first of them - about the opening, and the second set towards the close of a long and interesting Session of Congress, during which my time was very much occupied, and at the end thereof I had a pressing call to my estate in Virginia from whence I have not been returned more than ten or twelve days. -

I have read with peculiar pleasure and approbation, the work
you

you patronise; so much to your own honor and the utility of the public. — Such a general view of the agriculture in the several Counties of Great Britain is extremely interesting; and cannot fail of being very beneficial to the agricultural concerns of your Country and to those of every other wherein they are read, and must entitle you to their warmest thanks for having set such a plan on foot, and for prosecuting it with the zeal & intelligence you do. —

I am so much pleased with the plan & execution myself, as to pray you to have the goodness to direct your Bookseller to continue ^{to forward them to me} ~~them~~, accompanied with the cost which shall be paid to his order or remitted so soon as the amount is made known to me. — When the whole are received I will promote, as far as in me lays, the reprinting of them here. —

I know of no pursuit in which more real & important service can be rendered to any Country, than by improving its agriculture — its breed of useful animals — and other branches of a husbandry

bad manners cared, - nor can I conceive any
 plan more conducive to this end than the
 one you have introduced for bringing to
 view the actual state of them, in all parts
 of the Kingdom; by which good & bad ha-
 bits are exhibited in a manner too plain
 to be misconceived; for the accounts given
 to the British board of Agriculture, appear
 in general, to be drawn up in a masterly
 manner, so as fully to answer the expec-
 tations formed in the excellent plan now
 produced them; affording at the same time
 a fund of information useful in politi-
 cal economy - serviceable in all countries

Commons - Tithes - Tensantry
 (of which we feel nothing in this coun-
 try) are in the list of impediments I
 perceive, to perfection in English farm-
 ing - and Taxes are heavy deductions
 from the ~~cost~~ profit thereof - Of these
 we have none, or so light as hardly to
 be felt. - Your system of Agriculture,
 it must be confessed, is in a stile superi-
 or & of course much more expensive
 than ours, but when the balance at
 the

24
The end of the year is struck, by deducting the taxes, poor rates, and incidental charges of every kind, from the produce of the land, in the two countries, no doubt can remain in which scale it is to be found.

It will be sometime I hear, before an apicultural Society with Congressional aids will be established in this Country; - we must walk as other countries have done before we can run, Smaller Societies must prepare the way for greater but with the lights before us, I hope we shall not be so slow in maturation as older nations have been. - An attempt, as you will perceive by the enclosed outlines of a plan, is making to establish a State Society in Pennsylvania for apicultural improvements. - If it succeeds, it will be a step in the ladder, at present it is too much in embryo to decide on the result. -

Our domestic animals, as well as our apiculture, are inferior to yours in point of size but this does not proceed from any defect in the stamina of them, but

but to deficient care in providing for
their support; experience having abun-
dantly evinced that where our pastures
are as well improved as the soil & climate
will admit; where a competent store of
wholesome provender is laid up and
proper care used in serving it, that
our horses, black cattle, Sheep &c.^o are
not inferior to the best of their respec-
tive kinds which have been imported
from England. - Nor is the wool of our
Sheep inferior to that of the common son
with you: - as a proof - after the Peace
of Paris in 1783, and my return to the
occupations of a farmer, I paid parti-
cular ^{attention} to my breed of Sheep (of which I
usually kept about seven or eight hun-
dred). - By this attention, at the shearing
of 1789, the fleeces yielded me the average
quantity of $5\frac{1}{4}$ ^{lb} of wool; - a fleece of which,
promiscuously taken, I sent to M^r. Arthur
Young, who put it, for examination, into
the hands of Manufacturers. - These pro-
nounced it to be equal in quality to the
Kentish Wool. - In this same year, i.e.
1789

1789 I was again called from home, and have not had it in my power since to pay any attention to my farm; - the consequence of which is, that my sheep at the last shearing, yielded me not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ ~~lb.~~ - This is not a single instance of the difference between care and neglect. - Nor is the difference between good & bad management confined to that species of stock; for we find that good pastures and proper attention, can & does, fill our markets with beef of seven, eight & more hundred weight the four quarters; whereas from 450 to 500 (especially in the States ~~of~~ South of this where less attention hitherto has been ^{paid} to grass) may be found about the average weight. - In this market, some Bullocks were killed in the months of March & April last, the weights of w^{ch}, as taken from the accounts which were published at the time, you will find in a paper enclosed. - These were pampered steers, but from 800 to a thousand, the four quarters, is no uncommon weight,

Your

Your general history of sheep, with observations thereon, and the proper mode of managing them, will be an interesting work when completed, and with the information, & accuracy I am persuaded it will be executed, under your auspices, must be extremely desirable. — The climate of this Country, particularly that of the middle States is congenial to this species of animal, but want of attention to them in most farmers, added to the obstacles which prevent the importation of ~~the~~ a better kind, by men who would beat the expence, contributes not a little to the present inferiority. & experience. —

Mr. Edwards would have it as much in his power as most of our farmers, to solve the queries you propounded to him; — In addition to which a gentleman of my acquaintance / who is also among the best farmers of this Country, ~~namely~~ / to whom I gave the perusal of your propositions, has favored me with some ideas on the subject, as you
will

will find on a paper, herewith enclosed

The sample you were so obliging
as to put into the hands of M^r. Lee, for
me, of a Scotch fabric, is extremely ele-
gant, and I pray you to accept my thanks
for it, as I entreat you also to do for the
civilities shewn to that gentleman, who
has a grateful sense of them. -

Both M^r. Adams and M^r. Jeffer-
son had the perusal of the papers which
accompanied your note of the 11th of Sep

With great respect and esteem

I have the honor to be

Sir,
Your Obed^t Serv^t
G. Washington

Philadelphia 10th July 1795

Sir,

I could not omit so favorable an opportunity, as the departure of M^r Strickland affords me, of presenting my best respects to you; and my sincere thanks for the views of Agriculture in the different counties of Great Britain, which you have had the goodness to send me. — and for the Diploma (received by the hands of M^r Jay) admitting me a foreign honorary member of the board of Agriculture.

For this testimony of the attention of that body, and for the honor it has conferred on me, I have a high sense; in communicating of which to the board, I shall rely more on your goodness than on any expression of mine to render it acceptable. —

Yours

From the first intimation you were pleased to give me of this Institution, I conceived the most favorable ideas of its utility;—and the more I have seen & reflected on the plan since, the more convinced I am of its importance, in a national point of view, not only to your own country, but to all others which are not too much attached to old & bad habits, ^{to forsake them} and to new countries that are just beginning to form systems for the improvement of their husbandry. —

Mr Brickland has not been idle since he came to this country. — To him therefore, for a description of the climate, — the soil — the agriculture, and improvements generally, — the modes of carrying them on, — the produce of the land, — the draught cattle, — domestic animals, — and the farming implements which are used by our people in the Eastern and middle States, through which he has passed I shall refer you. — Nothing I believe, has

has escaped his observation that merited notice. —

You will add to the obligations already conferred on me, by directing your Bookseller to supply me regularly with all such proceedings of the board as are intended for the public, — and when they are in a fit state for it, that they may be neatly bound. — To this request, I pray he may be desired to add the cost, which shall be paid at sight, to his order here, or remitted to him as may be most convenient and agreeable to himself. —

~~~~~

The remainder of this letter, was meant as a conclusion in the usual terms, and is wanting, having been cut off, and given to a Gentleman, who requested it as a particular favour, "there being nothing," he declared, which he wished "for more, than to have in his possession a specimen of the hand writing, and above all the signature, of the illustrious "Washington" — London. 10th Feby. 1800.

John Sinclair

Philadelphia 20th Feb^y 1796

Sir,

When I last had the honor of writing to you, I had hopes - tho' I must confess they were not of the most sanguine sort - that I should have been enabled ere this, to have given you a more satisfactory account of the business you had been pleased to commit to me than will be conveyed in this letter. —

Doubts having arisen, from peculiar calls on the Treasury of this country for money (occasioned by the expences of our Wars with the Indians - the redemption of our captives at Algiers - obtaining peace with that Regency & Morocco - together with other demands in addition to the ordinary expences of government) that funds with difficulty would be provided to answer them, without imposing additional taxes - a measure wished to be avoided - I was restrained (after consulting one or two influential members of the Legislature) from introducing

and your plan for a contribution:— and, under these circumstances— I avoided communicating the "Extracts from the minutes of the proceedings, of the Board of Agriculture, respecting Mr. Elingtons mode of draining, &c." except to one gentleman only, in whom I had entire confidence, and who I knew was always disposed to promote measures of utility.— These being the grounds of my proceeding, I shall hope, altho your expectations may be disappointed you will receive the information as an evidence of my candour.—

Agreeably to your desire I have put the "Outlines of the 15th Chapter of the proposed general report from the Board of Agriculture, on the subject of Manures," into the hands of one of the most judicious farmers within my reach, and when his observations thereon are received, they shall be transmitted to you.

— I wish my own engagements would allow me time to attend, more than I do, to these agreeable, and useful pursuits; but having been absent from what I consider

sider my proper home (except on short occasional visits) for more than seven years, - and having entered into my 65th year - a period which requires tranquillity and ease. I have come to a determination to lease the farms of my Mount Vernon Estate, except the Mansion house farm & a grazing one 3 miles off, which I shall retain in my own occupation - for amusement, whilst life & health is dispensed to me. - And as many farmers from your country have emigrated to this, and many more, according to their accounts, desirous of following, if they knew beforehand, where and on what terms they could fix themselves compactly in a healthy & populous country, I have taken the liberty to enclose you the copy of a notification which I have published in some of the Gazettes of the United States; that in case any farmers are swayed by the descriptions therein contained are about to transplant themselves, to whom you might be inclined to give the information, that you may have it in your power to do so, - But let me entreat you, Sir,

To

to believe, that I have no wish to its promulgation farther than I have declared, - that I have no intention to invite emigrants, even if there are no restrictive acts against it, and if there be, that I am opposed to it altogether. -

As Wheat is the staple produce of that part of the country in which this estate lies, I shall fix the rent therein, at a bushel & half for every acre of arable land contained within the lease; - to be discharged, in case of failure of that crop, at the price the article bears in the market. - Two or three years ago I sent Mr Young a sketch of these farms, with all the fields, meads & lots, with their relative situations, laid down from actual surveys.

I have but little expectation that arrangements will be made by the time limited, for giving possession of the farms next year; nor should I wish to do it with such unskilful farmers as ours, if there was a prospect of obtaining them from any other country where husbandry was better understood, & more advantageously practiced. - It is time however to conclude, - for I feel ashamed at having employed so much of it, in matters interesting to myself only; & I shall do it with assurances as sincere as they are warm, of being - Sir Your most Obed.^t & obliged Son
 Sir John Sinclair Bart.
 G Washington

Philadelphia 12th June 1796

Sir,

A long, and interesting Session of Congress - which did not close until the first day of this month - and the Law which required to be carried into execution promptly, - will, I am persuaded, be admitted as a reasonable excuse for my not writing to you since the 20th of Feb^y. last agreeably to assurances then given - But what apology can I offer now. That I am about to give you the result of the enquiries you requested me to make, whoso it will be found to fall so far short of what you might have expected, from the time which has been taken, to render it?

Your wishes on this head, I communicated to Richard Peters Esq^r, who is one of the most intelligent, and best practical

practical, as well as theoretical farmers we have; with a desire that he would advise with others, and condense their observations in a summary statement. — Why this was not done — and why he could do no more — you will find in his own, original letter, with the questions and answers therein enclosed. —

To M^r. Peters's experience with respect to Gypsum as a manure; let me add the following, as an unequivocal evidence that it has no effect on stiff, heavy land, that does not absorb, or permit the water on the surface, occasioned by super abundant falls of Rain or Snow, to penetrate quickly; — which is the case, generally, with the soil of my Estate, at Mount Vernon. — The experiment, ~~and the proof~~ & proof to which I allude, were made eight or nine years ago, at the rate of from one to twenty bushels of the Plaster of Paris to the acre (among other things, to ascertain the just quantum to be used) — I spread it

it on grass grounds, and on ploughed land. — On the latter, part of it was ploughed in; — part harrowed in; — part scratched in with a light bush, — while another part lay undisturbed, on the surface — all with oats, in the Spring. — But it had no more effect in any instance — then, or since, than so much of the earth it was spread over would have had, if it had been taken up & spread again.

If any thing should hereafter occur on this, or any other subject, which I may think worthy your attention, in this interesting branch of your pursuits, I shall not fail to communicate them to you; — being with very great esteem, respect & consideration

Sir, Your most Obed^t, and
very A^{ly} Serv^t.

G. Washington

Sir John Sinclair

4
Philadelphia 6th March 1797.

Sir,

On the 11th of Dec.^r I wrote you a long letter; and intended before the close of the last Session of Congress (which ended on the third instant, conformably to the Constitution) to have addressed you again, but oppressed as I was with the various occurrences incident thereto, especially in the latter part of it, it has not been in my power to do so during its continuance; and now the arrangements necessary to my departure from this City—for a more tranquil theatre, and for the indulgence of rural pursuits, will oblige me to suspend my purpose until I am fixed at Mount Vernon, where I expect soon to be; having resigned the Chair of government to M^r. J^r. Adams on Friday last, the day on which I completed my second four years administration. —

Under

Under the circumstances here mentioned, I should not have troubled you, at this time with so short a letter but for the purpose of accompanying it with two or three Pamphlets on the subject of Agriculture; one of which treats more extensively on Gypsum as a manure than any I have seen before. — The other two will only serve to shew, that essays of a similar kind are making in this infant country. —

I am sorry to add, that nothing final in Congress, has been decided respecting the institution of a National board of Agriculture, recommended by me, at the opening of the Session. — But this did not, I believe, proceed from any disinclination to the measure, but from their limited sitting, and a pressure of what they conceived, more important business.

— I think it highly probable that next Session will bring this matter to maturity.

With the highest esteem & respect

I have the honor to be

Sr

Y^r most ob^{ly} ob^l serv^t

John Sinclair Bar^r

G. Washington

Sir John Sinclair Baronet
Whitehall
London

12
Mount Vernon 15 July 1797.

Sir

Since my last to you, dated in Philadelphia the 6th of March, I have been honoured with yours and Lord Hawke's joint favour of the 28 of March 1796 introductory of Doct. Scandalla, who gave me the pleasure of his company in June last, and whom I found a very sensible, and well informed man. -

I have also received your separate favours of the 20th of February and 29th of March, in the present year. The last accompanying your printed account of the origin of the Board of Agriculture and its progress for the three years after its establishment. - For your kindness in forwarding of them, I pray you to accept my best thanks

I will keep one copy of this work myself, and shall read it, I am sure with pleasure, so soon as I have passed through my harvest, which is now nearly finished; - the other copies shall

shall be put into such hands as I conceive will turn them to the best account.

Your not having, in either of the letters acknowledged above, mentioned the receipt of two from me dated the 10th & 11th of Dec^r 1796, the last a private and very long one, fills my mind with apprehension of a miscarriage, altho' I do not see how it should have happened, as they went with several other letters under cover to M^r Kemp (our Minister in London) who in a letter to me, dated the 6th of February following after giving information of what he had done with my other letters, adds "and as soon as Sir John Sinclair re-
turns to Town I will also deliver the letter addressed to him". -

Was it not for this information I should, by this conveyance, have forwarded a duplicate. -

The result of my enquiries of members of Congress, attending the December Session, varied so little from the details I had the honour to give you concerning the prices of land. "is my private letter of the 1st of December
as

as to render a second edition necessary. - The reduction however, in the price of our produce since last year, (flour having fallen from fifteen to ten or eight dollars a barrel, and other articles in that proportion) may occasion a fall in the price of Lands - a stagnation it has already ^{produced} ~~occasioned~~ - and I have been told a reduction also, in some of the latter sales. -

Our Crop of Wheat this year, from the best information I have been able to obtain, will be found very short, - on crop to three causes, - an uncommon drought last autumn, - a severe winter with but little snow to protect it, - and which is still more to be regretted, - to what, with us is denominated the Hessian Fly, which has spread devastation, more or less, in all quarters - nor has the latter wheat escaped the rust, - The grain however, ^{cell} ~~ex~~, where the Rust appeared before it was hard, is extremely fine, - We are equally as lucky in our Cattle, occasioned by a severe drought since the month of April.

With sentiments of high esteem & regard, I have the honor to be Sir
Y^r most Obed^t & Affectionate

Sir John Sinclair

G. Washington

Mount Vernon 6th Nov. 1797

Sir,

Since I had the honor of writing you on the 15.th of July, I have been favoured with your letter of the 13.th of Feb^y. introductory of Thos.^s Macdonald Esq.^r and your note of the 9th of June by Gen.^e Kojciuske, together with the Surveys, and papers accompanying both. — For your goodness in sending them, I pray you to accept my best thanks, and that I may not be a burdensome member of the Board, I enclose a small Bill of Exchange to be deposited in the hands of your Bookseller to defray the cost of the several copies of your works which may be forwarded to me. — When this is expended, I will make another deposit for the same purpose.

As neither of the notes, the receipt of which is acknowledged above — nor any other, has intimated in the most distant manner that my letters of the 10th and 11.th of December (the latter a private one) had ever reached

reached your hand, I now do, as well for the purpose of evincing that I was not inattentive to your request, as to give information which may yet (though late) be useful, forward a duplicate of the private letter from a Press copy taken at the time, and of my last also, of the 15th of July; being more disposed to trouble you with a repetition of the sentiments then expressed than to lay under the suspicion of inattention to y^r. comm^d.

I can now, with more certainty than on the 15th of July, inform you that lands have fallen in price, - ascribable to two causes, the shocking depredations committed on our Commerce (within the last six or eight months by the French) and the reduction in price of our produce - Both contributing to render cash a scarce, and of course a valuable article. -

Our Crops of Grain are, in places, tolerable, but upon the whole below mediocrity in quantity, whilst ^{the grain} is fine. - This also, that is the shortness of the crop, with assist in reducing the price of land still lower -

An eight years absence from home
(- except

(except occasional short visits to it) has thrown my building-, and other matters of private concern, into so much disorder, that at no period of my life have I ever been more engaged than in the last six or eight months to repair & bring them into tune again. — This has prevented me from looking into the Agricultural Surveys of the Counties of England & Scotland with the attention I propose to do the ensuing Winter. I shall certainly be very desirous of having a complete set of them, and if any are missing will apply accordingly, as it is my intention to have them ^{clayed, &c.} bound neatly. — With great pleasure I received a visit from M^r Macdonald a few days ago, who fully answers the character given of him, as a polite & sensible man.

With great respect, & the highest esteem & regard, I have the honor to be —

Sir, Your most obed^t, and obliged & affec^ted Serv^t

G^o Waplington

Sir John Sinclair
Baronet

THE TOMB OF WASEENGETDIN.

ON THE CHARACTER OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

WHOEVER has perused the preceding Letters will, I trust, concur with me in the following reflections.

1. That nothing could possibly place the character of this distinguished statesman in a more estimable light, than that of beholding the same individual, whose military exploits had spread his fame over the universe, and who had been invested with supreme power in the country where he was born, in the midst of all his various public avocations, carrying on an extensive correspondence with the natives of a distant country, on agricultural and other general inquiries of a similar nature.

2. That those who are blest with a reflecting and philosophic mind, must contemplate with pleasure and delight a person, elevated by the voice of his fellow-citizens to the summit of political authority, who, instead of wishing to aggrandize himself, and to extend his power, was anxiously bent to quit that situation, to which so many others would have fondly aspired, and to return to the comfort and enjoyment of private life; belying thus the insinuations of those malignant spirits who are perpetually railing against the talents and virtues which, conscious of wanting themselves, they do not believe that others can possess.

3. Is there, on the whole, any individual, either in ancient or modern history, who has prouder claims to distinction and pre-eminence, than the great character

whose letters this volume contains? His military talents were early celebrated; first in the service of Great Britain, and afterwards in that of America. His powers as a statesman, and as the founder of a Constitution, which, with British prejudices, I may consider as inferior to our own, but which promises to secure the happiness of the great nation it was formed to govern, cannot possibly be questioned. His public virtue, as the uncorrupted magistrate of a free people, who reluctantly received supreme authority, when it was judged necessary for the public good for him to assume it, and who anxiously wished to resign it into their hands, when it could be done with public safety, can hardly be equalled in history. His literary endowments were unquestionably of a superior order. His letters in this collection, his addresses to the American Congress, and his farewell oration when he quitted, for the last time, the Presidency of the United States, are models of such species of composition. His closing a well-spent life, after a short illness, without having his strength or faculties impaired by any previous disorder, or any untoward circumstances having occurred that could materially affect his feelings, or could possibly tarnish his fame, is an uncommon instance of good fortune. The scene in which he acted also, and the object which he achieved, are the most memorable which history furnishes. For it was such a man alone, who, by combining the force and commanding the confidence of thirteen separate states, could have dissolved those ties which subjected America to Europe, and to whom the political separation of two worlds is to be attributed. But, above all, what distinguished this celebrated warrior and statesman is, that to all those military and public talents, and to those literary endowments, which are so rarely united in the same person, he added the practice of every virtue that could adorn the private individual. It were in vain for me to attempt adequately to express the ideas I entertain of a character, in every respect so peculiarly splendid. The pen of the

immortal Shakspeare is alone competent to the task, and on the tombstone of the illustrious WASHINGTON let it be engraved—

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world,—*This was a man,*
—————*take him for all in all,*
*We shall not look upon his like again.**

* Julius Cæsar, Act V. Scene 5; and Hamlet, Act I. Scene 2.

A TRUE AND BEAUTIFUL PORTRAIT
OF THE
CHARACTER OF GENERAL WASHINGTON,
BY THE
LATE HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING,
PRIME MINISTER OF ENGLAND.

GENERAL WASHINGTON was, we believe, in his sixty-eighth year. The height of his person was about five-feet eleven; his chest full, and his limbs, though rather slender, well shaped and muscular. His head was small, in which respect he resembled the make of a great number of his countrymen. His eyes were of a very light grey colour; and, in proportion to the length of his face, his nose was long. Mr. STEWART, the eminent portrait painter, used to say, there were features in his face totally different from what he had ever observed in that of any other human being; the sockets of his eyes, for instance, were larger than he had ever met with before, and the upper part of the nose broader. All his features, he observed, were indicative of the strongest passions, yet, like SOCRATES, his judgment, and great self-command, have always made him appear a man of different character in the eyes of the world. He always spoke with great diffidence, and sometimes hesitated for a word, but it was always to find one particularly well calculated to express his meaning. His language was manly and expressive. At

levee, his discourse with strangers turned principally upon the subject of America; and if they had been through any remarkable places, his conversation was free and particularly interesting, for he was intimately acquainted with every part of the country. He was much more open and free in his behaviour at the levee than in private, and in the company of ladies, still more so, than when solely with men. Few persons ever found themselves for the first time in the company of General WASHINGTON, without being impressed with a certain degree of veneration and awe; nor did those emotions subside on a closer acquaintance; on the contrary, his person and deportment, were such, as rather tended to augment them. The whole range of history does not present to our view, a character, upon which we can dwell with such entire and unmixed admiration. *The long life of General Washington, is not stained by a single blot.*

He was indeed a man of such rare endowments, and such fortunate temperament, that every action he performed, was alike exempted from the character of vice or weakness. Whatever he said, or did, or wrote, was stamped with a striking and peculiar propriety. All his qualities were so happily blended, and so nicely harmonized, that the result was a great and perfect whole; the powers of his mind, and the dispositions of his heart, were admirably suited to each other. It was the union of the most consummate prudence, with the most perfect moderation. His views, though large and liberal, were not extravagant; his virtues, though comprehensive and beneficent, were discriminating, judicious, and practical; yet his character, though regular and uniform, possessed none of the littleness which may sometimes belong to those descriptions of men. It was formed a majestic pile, the effect of which was not impaired, but improved by order and symmetry; there was nothing in it to dazzle by wildness, or surprise by eccentricity. It was a higher

species of moral beauty; it contained everything great and elevated, but it had no false and tinsel ornament; it was not the model cried up by fashion and circumstance; its excellence was adapted to the true and just moral taste, incapable of change from the varying accidents of manners and opinions.

General WASHINGTON is not the Idol of a day, but the Hero of ages! Placed in circumstances of the most trying difficulty at the beginning of the American contest, he accepted that situation which was pre-eminent in danger and responsibility. His perseverance overcame every obstacle, conciliated every opposition; his genius supplied every resource. His enlarged views could plan, revise, and improve every branch of civil and military operation. He had the superior courage which can act, or forbear to act, as true policy dictates, careless of the reproaches of ignorance, either in power, or out of power. He knew how to conquer by waiting in spite of obloquy, for the moment of victory, and he merited true praise by despising unmerited censure.

In the most arduous movements of the contest, his prudent firmness proved the salvation of the cause which he supported. His conduct was on all occasions guided by the most pure disinterestedness. Far superior to low and grovelling motives, he seemed even to be uninfluenced by that ambition which has justly been called, the instinct of great souls. He acted ever as if his country's welfare, and that alone, was the moving spring. His excellent mind needed not even the stimulus of ambition, or the prospect of fame. Glory was but a secondary consideration. He performed great actions, he persevered in a course of laborious utility, with an equanimity that neither sought distinction, nor was flattered by it; his reward was in the consciousness of his rectitude, and in the success of his patriotic efforts.

As his elevation to the chief power was the unbiassed choice of his countrymen, his exercise of it was agreeable to the purity of its origin; as he had neither solicited nor usurped dominion, he had neither to contend with rivals, nor the revenge of enemies. As his authority was undisputed, so it required no jealous precautions, no rigorous severity. His government was mild and gentle; it was beneficent and liberal; it was wise and just; his prudent administration, consolidated and enlarged the dominion of an infant republic.

In voluntarily resigning the Magistracy which he had filled with such distinguished honour, he enjoyed the unequalled satisfaction of leaving to the state, he had contributed to establish, the fruits of his wisdom, and the example of his virtues. It is some consolation amidst the violence of ambition, and the criminal thirst of power, of which so many instances occur around us, to find a character whom it is honourable to admire, and virtuous to imitate. A conqueror for the freedom of his country! a legislator for its security! a magistrate for its happiness! his glories were never sullied by those excesses into which the highest qualities are apt to degenerate. With the greatest virtues, he was exempt from the corresponding vices. He was a man in whom the elements seemed so blended, that "Nature might have stood up to all the world," and owned him as her work. His fame, bound to no country, will be confined to no age.

The character of General WASHINGTON, which his contemporaries regret and admire, will be transmitted to posterity, and the memory of his virtues, while patriotism and virtue are held sacred among men, will remain undiminished!

Peace to the memory of a man of Worth!

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE FOLLOWING IS AN OFFICIAL AND PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF THE ILLNESS AND DEATH OF
THE ILLUSTRIOUS WASHINGTON, AS PUBLISHED BY THE PHYSICIANS WHO ATTENDED HIM.

SOME time in the night of Friday, the 13th December, having been exposed to a rain on the preceding day, General WASHINGTON was attacked with an inflammatory affection of the upper part of the windpipe, called in technical language, *cynanche trachealis*. The disease commenced with a violent ague, accompanied with some pain in the upper and fore part of the throat, a sense of stricture in the same part, a cough, and a difficult rather than a painful deglutition, which were soon succeeded by fever, and a quick and laborious respiration. The necessity of blood-letting suggesting itself to the General, he procured a bleeder in the neighbourhood, who took from his arm, in the night, twelve or fourteen ounces of blood. He would not by any means be prevailed upon by the family to send for the attending physician till the following morning, who arrived at Mount Vernon at about eleven o'clock on Saturday. Discovering the case to be highly alarming, and foreseeing the fatal tendency of the disease, two consulting physicians were immediately sent for, who arrived, one at half after three, the other at four o'clock in the afternoon. In the interim were employed two copious bleedings, a blister was applied to the part affected, two moderate doses of calomel were given, and an

injection was administered, which operated on the lower intestines—but all without any perceptible advantage, the respiration becoming still more difficult and distressing.

Upon the arrival of the first of the consulting physicians, it was agreed, as there were yet no signs of accumulation in the bronchial vessels of the lungs, to try the result of another bleeding, when about thirty-two ounces of blood were drawn, without the smallest apparent alleviation of the disease. Vapours of vinegar and water were frequently inhaled; ten grains of calomel were given, succeeded by repeated doses of emetic tartar, amounting in all to five or six grains, with no other effect than a copious discharge from the bowels. The powers of life seemed now manifestly yielding to the force of the disorder. Blisters were applied to the extremities, together with a cataplasm of bran and vinegar to the throat. Speaking, which was painful from the beginning, now became almost impracticable; respiration grew more and more contracted and imperfect, till half after eleven o'clock on Saturday night, retaining the full possession of his intellect, when he expired without a struggle.

He was fully impressed at the beginning of his complaint, as well as through every succeeding stage of it, that its conclusion would be mortal; submitting to the several exertions made for his recovery rather as a duty, than from any expectation of their efficacy. He considered the operations of death upon his system as coeval with the disease; and several hours before his decease, after repeated efforts to be understood, succeeded in expressing a desire that he might be permitted to die without interruption.

During the short period of his illness, he economized his time in the arrangement of such few concerns as required his attention, with the utmost serenity, and anticipated his approaching dissolution with every demonstration of that equanimity for which his whole life has been so uniformly and singularly conspicuous.

JAMES CRAIK, *Attending Physician.*

ELISHA C. DICK, *Consulting Physician.*

● No. II.

THE melancholy event of General WASHINGTON's Death was announced to the President of the United States in the following Letter from Mr. LEAR, who is mentioned by the General in his Letter of July 20th, 1794.

●

MOUNT VERNON, Dec. 16, 1799.

SIR,

IT is with inexpressible grief that I have to announce to you the death of the great and good General WASHINGTON. He died last evening between ten and eleven o'clock, after a short illness of about twenty-four hours. His disorder was an inflammatory sore throat, which proceeded from a cold, of which he made but little complaint on Friday. On Saturday morning about three o'clock he became ill. Dr. DICK attended him in the morning, and Dr. CRAIK, of Alexandria, and Dr. BROWN, of Port Tobacco, were soon after called in. Every medical assistance was afforded, but without the desired effect. His last scene corresponded with the whole tenor of his life. Not a groan, not a complaint escaped him in extreme distress. With perfect resignation, and a full possession of his reason, he closed his well spent life.

TOBIAS LEAR.

The President of the United States.

It is unnecessary to add, that the intelligence of this distressing event was rapidly spread throughout all America, and received with the deepest symptoms of sorrow and regret; nor was there any part of Europe, where those who felt any respect for integrity and virtue, did not consider the death of General WASHINGTON as a public calamity.

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